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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please add new claims 20-25, as shown in the following listing of claims, which will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Claims 18 and 19 were withdrawn by the Examiner. Claims 1-3, 6-12, and 15-25 are currently in the application.

Listing of claims:

1 (previously presented). A method for testing a test plasmid containing a gene encoding for an endothelial cell mitogen for the ability to produce a biologically active endothelial cell mitogen protein, wherein endothelial cells demonstrate enhanced survival in a cell survival assay in response to conditioned media from a transfection host cell line transfected with the test plasmid in comparison to conditioned media from a transfection host cell line transfected with a control plasmid, the method comprising:

- a. transiently transfecting a transfection host cell line with a test plasmid containing a gene encoding for an endothelial cell mitogen;
- b. incubating test sample endothelial cells with conditioned media from the transiently transfected transfection host cell line;
- c. determining the ability of the test sample endothelial cells to reduce MTS to formazan; and
- d. determining the level of cell survival of the test sample endothelial cells incubated with conditioned media from the transfection host cell line transfected with the test plasmid containing a gene encoding for an endothelial cell mitogen as compared to control sample endothelial cells incubated with conditioned media from the transfection host cell line transfected with a control plasmid;

wherein the level of cell survival of both the test sample and control sample endothelial cells is determined by the ability of the endothelial cells to reduce MTS to formazan;